

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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USICA

DEPT FOR NEA/ARN MONROE

E.O.11652:N/A
SUBJ: PREPARATIONS FOR SIGNING OF ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE
- UNDER US/SARG CULTURAL AGREEMENT

REF: (A) USICA 1794/; (B) DAMASCUS 3655

1. MET 8/9 WITH DIRECTOR ZIFA OF OFFICE CULTURAL AFFAIRS AT FONMIN. GAVE HIM DRAFT OF NEW ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE (CAAS) EMBODYING CHANGES SOUGHT BY SARG AND APPROVED BY AGENCY (REFTEL A), WITH ITEMS RELATING TO RESEARCH CENTER AND SISTER CITIES INCLUDED AT END AS STATEMENT OF INTENT PER REFTEL B.
2. ZIFA SAID THEY HAVE NOT YET GOT REPLY FROM HIGHER UP (MINISTERIAL ACADEMIC COUNCIL AND PROBABLY PM) REGARDING APPROVAL OF US-PROPOSED CENTER. HE SAID THAT IN ANY CASE THIS WOULD REQUIRE SEPARATE GOVERNMENTAL DECREE UNDER SAME LAW WHICH ESTABLISHES FOREIGN CULTURAL CENTERS. (IN EARLIER MEETING WITH CAO AND AMSPECS ZONIS AND GIBSON MIN HIGH ED FAHAM INDICATED HE FAVORED FOUNDATION OF SUCH A CENTER, BUT THAT SARG WOULD REQUIRE DETAILED INFO ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOW IT WOULD BE SET UP, ADMINISTERED, AND FINANCED, AND THAT IT SAW USG INVOLVEMENT AS VITAL. WE ARE AWAITING ABOVE DETAILS FROM AGENCY, ZONIS AND GIBSON, BEFORE SUBMITTING DETAILED PROPOSAL REQUESTED BY SARG).

3. WE RAISED POSSIBILITY WITH ZIFA, IN VIEW OF LATE DATE, OF CHANGING CAAS FROM FY-78-79 TO FY-79-80. HE

ACKNOWLEDGED LOGIC OF THIS STEP, PARTICULARLY DUE
IMPOSSIBILITY OBTAIN UNIVERSITY PLACEMENT FOR GRADUATE
STUDENTS THIS FALL. ADVISE WHETHER AGENCY CONCURS WE
REWRITE CAAS FOR FY-79 AND 80.

4. ZIFA RAISED QUESTION OF HOUSE ACTION ON SYRIAN AID
BILL; ASKED IF THIS WOULD AFFECT IMPLEMENTATION OF CAAS.
WE REPLIED THAT IT CERTAINLY MIGHT AFFECT SCHEDULE II
ACTIVITIES, WHICH ARE AID-FUNDED, BUT ASSURED HIM THAT
THE ADMINISTRATION WAS WORKING TO RESTORE THE FUNDS IN
COMMITTEE.

5. FORESEE SARG WILL WISH SIGN CAAS ASAP AFTER RAMADAN,
PERHAPS ON SHORT NOTICE. IN LIGHT AMBIGUITIES REFTEL A
WOULD APPRECIATE CLEAR STATEMENT OF AGENCY AUTHORISATION
TO SIGN DOCUMENT.

6. BEGIN LOU: WE ANTICIPATE SOME DIFFICULTIES AND
SARG DISAPPOINTMENT REGARDING THE 25 GRADUATE SCHOLAR-
SHIPS. THE HIGHER ED MIN HAS APPARENTLY ALREADY
DESIGNATED THE RECIPIENTS: SOME HAVE BEGUN TO SHOW UP
AT OUR AND AID'S OFFICES. ALTHOUGH AID REPS STATED AT
LAST MEETING THAT ONLY FIELDS OF STUDY CONNECTED WITH
SYRIA'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE ACCEP-
TABLE, HIGHER ED MIN HAS NOMINATED SOME UNIV TEACHING
ASSISTANTS IN THE HUMANITIES AND AID DIRECTOR RAMSEY
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HAS ADDRESSED THIS POTENTIALLY STICKY QUESTION IN A
8/14 LETTER TO MIN OF PLANNING. POUCHING COPY THIS
LETTER. END LOU. AUDROUE

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